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Onstage Systems brings live events back to Dallas area with Capricorn Drive-In and Elation gear

When COVID-19 hit earlier this year, Hyacinth Belcher, President and CEO of full-service audiovisual company Onstage Systems, worked hard to find a way to bring live events back safely to the Dallas area. Belcher dedicated months to the project, which culminated in Capricorn Drive-In, a series of live events held at historic Fair Park, a 277-acre campus located just east of Downtown Dallas.

Fair Park is a beautiful, art-deco property with a storied history that hosts the State Fair of Texas each year. "To me, it was the ideal place to celebrate the diversity of Dallas and the local talent of the area," says, Belcher, "which we did with a diverse lineup of music styles and ethnic backgrounds."



Supporting the area's up-and-coming talent is deserving of praise in its own right, but as a live industry professional and head of a significant entertainment technology provider, Belcher also had other motivations in mind. "We also used it as a proof of concept to show city officials that live events could happen safely and that it was possible to host larger shows."

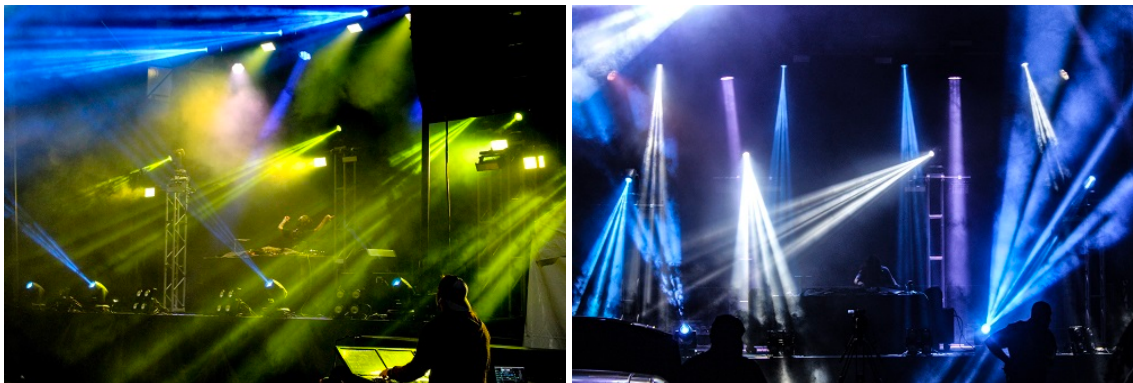
Safety plan

To be approved by the City of Dallas, Onstage Systems developed a safety plan with attendee management as priority number one. The company created a parking diagram with designated attendee sitting areas following COVID-19 distancing guidelines. Once final approval came from the City around mid-summer, Belcher and her team spent the next month producing, promoting and handling production for a series of live events that took place later in the summer.

From August 28 to September 5, Capricorn Drive-In hosted music, film, and performances at Fair Park and used an Elation lighting rig to light the shows. Then on October 16 they upped the gear list for a special performance by national act Subtronics with support artists HESH, Al Ross, Level Up,

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and Ace Aura. The stage lighting included 14 Platinum Beam 5R Extreme™ and 4 Platinum Beam 5R™ narrow beam moving heads, 8 Rayzor 760™ LED wash moving heads, DTW Blinder 700 IP™, 14 Hex Panels™ from sister-company ADJ along with strobe lights. In addition to supplying the lighting and handling event coordination, Onstage Systems provided staging, video and audio production.



Went big

Onstage Systems co-promoted the Subtronics event where nearly 1500 paid guests enjoyed the show from 393 car safety pods. Attendees were encouraged to tailgate from their automobiles or sit in the designated areas on blankets and picnic chairs. Belcher says they went bigger than most drive in's by supplying a SL260 mobile stage flanked by LED walls, multiple cameras and also mixed visuals. Guests could enjoy the show on their car radio or via live PA complete with audio delays. Because the back lot was quite a distance from the stage, Onstage also supplied a 40x22 inflatable screen with a digital 30K projector from over 400' away.

Lighting design for the Subtronics show was by Sean Hedrick with assistance from Sterling Cordier. Tommy Dowdy and assistant Casey Shelton handled FOH audio. All are Onstage Systems employees. Video was the responsibility of Mike Moore. The challenge for us had been getting the lighting rig to 'look big' across such the vast audience space that the cars take up," stated LD Hedrick. "With that being said, it seems a greater fixture count and punchy beams and washes have been the solution."

Addressing fixture types used on the event, he continues: "The reason we tend to choose the Platinum Beam 5R over other fixtures in our inventory is because of its proven durability, especially to the elements of Mother Nature. We also like it for its ability to punch through the air, along with the quick reflexes of the pan and tilts motors, and its small size. We do a lot of outdoor shows and the Platinum 5R Beam, Rayzor, and DTW 700 4-lites provide a sense of relief in knowing my rig will keep working through a 3 or 4 day weekend outdoors with no to little repairs throughout the week. We have also been using our fleet of Proteus beams quite a bit the last few years and have now been using them in these drive-in series. We love how bright and reliable the fixture is in all weather. I personally have taken the Proteus Beam from the middle of nowhere in the Las Vegas



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desert, to the harsh wet and humid weather Texas has to offer, and it keeps working. The fact that the lights are so reliable puts less stress on our crew and inventory and allows us to bring more lighting with less worry to these drive-in shows.”

Dallas’s first COVID-19 safe public concert

Great effort was placed on creating a COVID-19 safe, live event experience with social distancing and mask protocols in place. Onstage Systems has two certified COVID-19 Compliance Officers on staff and all staff and artists underwent temperature checks and contact tracing. The efforts proved a success and the event had the distinction of being Dallas’s first COVID-19 safe public concert approved by the City of Dallas.

Belcher says she is happy for the new relationships she has built during a down time for our industry and is understandably proud to have played a part in bringing live events back to Dallas with the City’s first approved COVID-19 safe public concert. “We were able to create events when they otherwise wouldn’t have happened. That allowed for Fair Park, security, parking and custodial attendants, and other vendors, including the generator and heavy machinery rental companies, to continue working while everything else was shut down - not to mention our production team. It is possible to create a live event that’s safe for everyone involved,” she concludes.

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About Elation Professional

Based in California with facilities in Florida and Mexico City, as well as European offices in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative lighting and video products known for its superior performance, excellent efficiency, and outstanding price:value ratio, all backed by a hard-earned reputation for Total Support. Through nearly three decades of intelligent lighting development, our mission has always been simple: to provide best-in-class products and service while offering the best value:performance ratio in the industry, helping show designers and producers achieve their vision. From discharge to LED, intelligent to conventional, Elation products continue to be a part of the industry’s most exciting projects across the globe and our list of references is always growing. We invite you to take a closer look at www.elationlighting.com

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